

**New Jersey Department of Community Affairs  
Office of Local Planning Services**

**STATEWIDE AND REGIONAL PLANNING ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM  
GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

**PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The Statewide and Regional Planning Assistance Grant Program (the “Program”) supports coordinated statewide and regional planning activities to address unmet recovery-related planning needs. The Program will provide funding to nonprofit organizations, universities, or colleges in need of planning support for statewide and regional recovery -related activities. This funding opportunity will support applied research initiatives and land use modeling efforts directed at reducing the risks and recovering from the impacts of natural disasters and which advance statewide and regional resiliency planning. The Program will be administered by the Office of Local Planning Services (LPS) in the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJDCa).

**GRANT DESCRIPTION**

The Program will provide funding to nonprofit organizations, universities, or colleges to demonstrate the validity of research related to disaster recovery planning activities. LPS will consider proposals that describe research projects whose results or products can be applied to pre-disaster planning and recovery-related actions that have the potential to benefit a defined region, regions or the entire state. The Program will address resiliency from any aspect: social, economic, environmental and/or infrastructure resiliency, as long as the design shows strong potential to have a demonstrable impact on public decision making, recovery and long-term resilience and involves community engagement.

The Program is intended to increase engagement and collaboration at a regional level while strengthening resilience. In addition, the methodology used must be replicable.

**GRANT FUNDING**

DCA has allocated \$1.2 million for the Statewide and Regional Planning Assistance program. Additional information on this funding source is available in the New Jersey Action Plan, Amendment 7, for the Second Allocation of CDBG-DR Funds located on the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs website at: [www.state.nj.us/dca/divisions/sandyrecovery](http://www.state.nj.us/dca/divisions/sandyrecovery).

All awards made through the Statewide and Regional Planning Assistance Grant program will be subject to the CDBG-DR regulations and the New Jersey DCA CDBG-DR Action Plan, as approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Funding for the project will end on May 31, 2017.

**USE OF FUNDS**

This is a reimbursement program. All funding requests for eligible activities must be accompanied by adequate supporting documentation as solely determined by LPS. Reasonable costs associated with these activities, including the costs to collect, assemble or buy data, software, and maps may also be funded. Indirect costs must be included in the total grant amount requested.

## ELIGIBILITY

Nonprofit organizations, universities, or colleges in need of grant funding for planning support for regional or statewide recovery-related activities are eligible for this grant.

In addition, all applicants are required to complete the following in order to be considered for this funding opportunity:

- Participation in a mandatory information session by webinar on **October 13, 2015 at 10:00 – 11:00 AM** to learn about the application process and conditions of award. Preregistration is required. Email [Carmen.Valentin@dca.nj.gov](mailto:Carmen.Valentin@dca.nj.gov) and [Nicholas.Nassiff@dca.nj.gov](mailto:Nicholas.Nassiff@dca.nj.gov) by **October 9, 2015**. Include names, titles, and contact information for those who will be attending and the name of the entity they are affiliated with.
- A narrative demonstrating the applicant's capacity to complete the proposed project and to provide project management and oversight for activities and fiscal operations. List key in-house personnel who will be involved and key outside consulting support necessary for the project.
- Submission of a Duplication of Benefits affidavit signed and dated by the authorized official for the applicant organization which identifies other funding sources that have contributed to and/or are committed to the project proposed. (See Forms and Templates section.)
- Submission of a Debarment and Suspension Certification form signed and dated by the authorized official signing for the applicant organization. (See Forms and Templates section.)
  - The administrative requirements at 24 CFR 85.35 prohibit NJDCA or other funded entities from making any award or permitting any award (sub grant or contract) at any tier to any party that is debarred or suspended or is otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in federal assistance programs subject to 2 CFR Part 2424.
  - Each program that administers federal funds must annually document that Recipient Organizations and their Principals have not been suspended or debarred. Prior to entering into any HUD-funded agreement, NJDCA must check all contractors, subcontractors (including sub-tier contractors), consultants, and subrecipients against the System for Award Management (SAM), found at <https://www.sam.gov>.
  - In addition, NJDCA requires all of its subrecipients to verify annually, using the System for Award Management (SAM), found at <https://www.sam.gov>, that no contractors who have been debarred by either the State or Federal government are receiving contracts utilizing CDBG-DR funds.

## GRANT APPLICATION SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements form the basis for application completeness and review. The information submitted will be scored and ranked based on the points indicated. The maximum score is 100 points. Failure to adhere to these requirements will result in the disqualification of the application.

1. Applicants must provide LPS with a detailed proposal that includes, at minimum, the following:
  - a) Narrative discussion that describes and substantiates the need for the project; **(0-10 points)**
  - b) A scope of work that: **(0-10 Points)**
    - i. Provides a detailed description of each proposed task;
    - ii. Lists meetings, community involvement and outreach, and monthly reporting as individual tasks;
    - iii. Provides a detailed description of the intended project deliverables;
  - c) Detailed justification for the selection of the proposed project region. For purposes of this grant opportunity, a region is an area encompassing land in more than one municipality, a county , or more than one county, that is bound together by shared characteristics and regional systems, including but not limited to: infrastructure, environmental features, housing or economic activity; **(0-10 points)**
  - d) Description of the expected benefits and how these benefits are ready to be tested under real conditions in the project region; **(0-10 points)**
  - e) Description of the methodology's replicability in other regions or areas Statewide; **(0-10 points)**
  - f) Demonstration that the research initiative or land use modeling developed by the applicant is ready to be applied and utilized for accomplishing the objectives of the proposed project; **(0-10 points)**
  - g) Demonstration of the potential of the research project to advance long-term resiliency, preferably through a multimedia presentation. Alternatively, a presentation with discussion points and visualized potential outcomes can be utilized; **(0-10 points)**
  - h) Identification of all funding sources that have been leveraged thus far in addition to future funding that may be leveraged for implementation of the project; **(0-5 points)**
  - i) A detailed budget itemized by task, indicating hours and cost by project professional and direct expenses, such as reproduction costs. (See Financial Management Plan template in Forms and Templates section); and **(0-10 points)**

- j) A project timeline itemized by task, including project milestones and benchmarks. All project activities must be completed and all deliverables submitted to LPS by **May 31, 2017**.

**(0-5 points)**

2. Applicants must secure a letter of interest indicating the governmental unit's willingness to participate, and what support it will provide to the Program, including but not limited to organizing public meetings, providing meeting space, and providing data to support the project. Submit the letter of interest with the proposal.

**(0-10 points)**

**NOTE:** After the selection process, the applicant(s) awarded grant funding must provide LPS with a resolution adopted by the governing body of each governmental unit participating in the project, officially declaring the governmental unit's commitment to the project. The resolutions will be required before execution of the subrecipient agreement between the selected applicant(s) and NJDCA.

#### **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION**

The Office of Local Planning Services must be in receipt of one electronic copy of the complete application (including all documentation and information required in the Eligibility and Grant Application Submission Requirements section requirements) by **4:00 P.M. EST on November 20, 2015**, in order to be eligible for consideration. The complete application must be submitted electronically to [Carmen.Valentin@dca.nj.gov](mailto:Carmen.Valentin@dca.nj.gov) and [Nicholas.Nassiff@dca.nj.gov](mailto:Nicholas.Nassiff@dca.nj.gov)

Problems with electronic submission of the application should be directed to Carmen Valentin at (609)633-6877 or Nicholas Nassiff at (609)633-0597 during State business hours from Monday through Friday.

#### **ADDRESS FOR APPLICATION PACKAGE SUBMITTAL**

Send five hard copies of the complete application (including all documentation and information required in the Eligibility and Grant Application Submission Requirements section requirements) and all of the required documentation postmarked by **November 20, 2015 to:**

Attn: Nicolas Nassiff  
New Jersey Department of Community Affairs  
Office of Local Planning Services  
P.O. Box 813  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0813

LPS will send the applicant a notice of receipt by email. An applicant who submits an incomplete application will be deemed ineligible.

#### **INQUIRIES ABOUT THE GRANT PROGRAM AND FUNDING AVAILABILITY**

All inquiries must be made via e-mail to both [Carmen.Valentin@dca.nj.gov](mailto:Carmen.Valentin@dca.nj.gov) and [Nicholas.Nassiff@dca.nj.gov](mailto:Nicholas.Nassiff@dca.nj.gov) by November 18, 2015. Inquiries and responses as well as the published Notice of Fund Availability, guidelines and required documents will be posted at: <http://www.nj.gov/dca/services/lps/SRPAGP.html>

## APPLICANT SELECTION PROCESS

A review panel consisting of Office of Local Planning Services (LPS) staff will review and evaluate the applications utilizing the point scoring system described in the Application Submission Requirements section.

The applicants with the three highest scores will be called for an interview as part of the selection process. The interview panel consisting of LPS staff will evaluate the responses to interview questions utilizing a point scoring system. The applicants receiving the highest combined scores for the application and interview will receive grant funding. Applicants will be notified of award on **December 11, 2015**.

## DELIVERABLES

1. A report or planning document that:

- Describes the project methodology
- Describes the project outcomes that advance long term resiliency statewide or regionally
- Provides conclusions, recommendations and strategies on how the project results can be used to reduce vulnerability and improve resiliency in the project area

2. Digital and editable copies of all maps, figures, and datasets used for the project and any other work products associated with the project

**Projects must be completed and all deliverables received by the Office of Local Planning Services by May 31, 2017. All data, information, and deliverables for the project will become property of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.**

## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Program will be administered by LPS, which maintains a staff of planners licensed by both the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and the New Jersey Board of Professional Planners and a grant administrator. The selected candidate must sign a Subrecipient Agreement with DCA prior to any work commencing. Upon receiving a signed Subrecipient Agreement, DCA can reimburse the selected candidate for incurred costs that are allowable, allocable and reasonable within the timeline of the program.

In order to effectively manage and provide oversight to its disaster recovery programs, the State of New Jersey developed the Sandy Integrated Recovery Operations and Management System (SIROMS). SIROMS provides a shared technology infrastructure, and technical and fiscal operations support to implement the programs identified in the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery Action Plan for New Jersey. SIROMS can be accessed directly at [www.SIROMS.com](http://www.SIROMS.com) or at <http://www.nj.gov/dca/services/lps/SRPAGP.html>.

**The selected candidate must follow these steps:**

1. Submit contact information and upload the required documents in SIROMS, which are:
  - a. Scope of work with a detailed breakdown of tasks, activities and hourly rates, amount requested and a timeline for completing the project
  - b. Completed and signed Duplication of Benefits Affidavit

- c. Completed and signed Debarment and Suspension Certification
- d. The most recent Audit Statement per 2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards), Subpart F (Audit Requirements) found at <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=37a66668e5eff4bd34b440df5bba0475&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5>

2. The responsible official for the New Jersey nonprofit organization, university or college selected (hereinafter the “Subrecipient”) must request a username and password to access the system. This will allow electronic submission of monthly progress reports and invoices as well as direct deposit of reimbursement checks.

Email the request to LPS Post Sandy Planning Assistance Grant Program Administrator at [Carmen.Valentin@dca.nj.gov](mailto:Carmen.Valentin@dca.nj.gov) or Planner at [Nicholas.Nassiff@dca.nj.gov](mailto:Nicholas.Nassiff@dca.nj.gov). Provide name, title, email address, phone number, and name of the Subrecipient.

3. The SIROMS Helpdesk will send the applicant a username and password, along with instructions on how to navigate the system. If the responsible official chooses to delegate the responsibility of managing the grant, the responsible official must send an email to Carmen Valentin or Nicholas Nassiff stating that he or she is delegating the role and provide the delegate’s name, title, email, and phone number.

## **MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE**

LPS will monitor progress toward the completion of the scope of work within the timeline and budget agreed to by the Subrecipient and NJDCA.

After the work has commenced, the Subrecipient must submit monthly progress reports to LPS. (See Forms and Templates section.) Monthly progress reports must be submitted by the 14th of the month following the report period.

Failure to submit monthly reports and/or other documents as required by the agreement in a timely manner may result in a suspension of the grant and the return of all grant funds provided to the Subrecipient through this program.

## **RECORDKEEPING**

The Subrecipient is required to maintain electronic and hard copies of all documents related to the Statewide and Regional Planning Assistance Grant Program.

## **AUDITS and INSPECTIONS**

The Department of Community Affairs requires that all entities receiving CDBG-DR funds and expending more than \$500,000 (\$750,000 effective January 1, 2015) in Federal grant and/or State awards in a given fiscal year have an audit conducted in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards), Subpart F (Audit Requirements) found at <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=37a66668e5eff4bd34b440df5bba0475&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5>

The most recent auditor’s report must be submitted to the DCA Office of Local Planning Services as part of the application process.

The Department of Community Affairs, the State Comptroller, HUD, Office of Inspector General, HUD monitors, and auditors contracted by any of them, have the option of auditing all records and accounts of Subrecipient and/or its Consultants that relate to this project at any time during normal business hours, as often as deemed necessary, to audit, examine, and make excerpts or transcripts of all relevant data upon providing the Subrecipient or Consultant, as appropriate, with reasonable advance notice.

#### **REQUESTS FOR REIMBURSEMENT**

The Subrecipient must submit the Request for Reimbursement Form (See Forms and Templates section) along with supporting documentation consisting of the invoice, timesheets and receipts for all eligible costs, in order to be reimbursed. A maximum of six reimbursement requests for the duration of the grant is allowed. All deliverables must be submitted and approved by LPS before the final request for reimbursement can be paid.

#### **DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED WITH THE APPLICATION**

1. Duplication of Benefits Affidavit
2. Debarment and Suspension Certification
3. Financial Management Plan

#### **DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED BY SELECTED CANDIDATE(S)**

1. Monthly Progress Report Form
2. Request for Reimbursement Form